

Why Do Christians Meet Together and Fellowship?

To see why Christians meet together we need to first look at: **What is the Church?**

The Bible uses many different pictures to describe the Church. The Church is the Body of Christ (Eph. 1:22-23). This body is composed of all the individual members, who are those who believe in Christ. The Church is also described as a building, a holy temple, and a dwelling place of God in spirit (Eph. 2:21-22). But related to meeting together, the key view is that we are *members one of another* (Rom. 12:5).

Now, we need to look at **God's desire for the Church.**

God desires that "we all arrive at the oneness of the faith and of the full knowledge of the Son of God, at a full-grown man, at the measure of the fullness of Christ" (Eph. 4:13). In other words, God wants us to grow and mature, not just individually, but together as an organic body (Eph. 4:16, Col 2:19). God's desire is for "the perfecting of the saints unto the work of the ministry, unto the building up of the Body of Christ" (Eph. 4:12).

When we come together, we can build up the Church.

In 1 Corinthians 14:26, Paul says "Whenever you come together, each one has a psalm, has a teaching, has a revelation, has a tongue, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for building up." Also, when we prophesy, the church receives building up (1 Co 14:5) and the words we speak to one another can be build up the body and give grace to those who hear (Eph. 4:29). We need to be with the saints to apprehend (lay hold of) the fullness of God (Eph. 3:18) and to share what each one has.

The church as the body of Christ

The body is composed of all the members, not just a few (1Co 12:12). It is alright to meet with a few members, but the body is composed of many members with different functions, and all the different parts of the body need each others' function (1Co 12:14-28). The church, as the body of Christ, is an organic entity, just like a human body. In a healthy body, all the members grow together, so when you are cut off from the body, you suffer and the body suffers. For this reason Paul stresses oneness in the body in 1 Corinthians 12 – your suffering and rejoicing causes the Body to suffer and rejoice in accordance. Not living as a functioning member of the body (aka not in the "body life") will cause your growth to be slowed since you are not connected to the (other functioning) members who will give you life and help you grow.

In summary, God wants His Church to be built up. Our meeting together with other members in the body can build up His body. Basically the more we function together as the body, the better we will grow together.

Danger of Isolation: you will die!! (spiritually)

Growth is dependent on being connected to others.

We are strengthened when we are with other

Christians (Ecc. 4:12) In the New testament, believers are rarely seen alone.